



# STATEHOUSE OBSERVER

Published by Nebraska State Personnel—Department of Administrative Services

**2003**

**October**

**November**

**December**

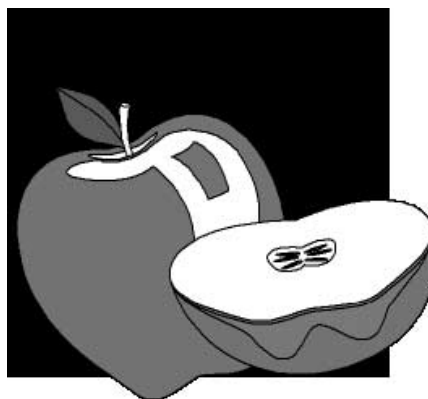
## In this issue...

Road Safety.....	2
Turkey Time .....	5
Suggestion System.....	6
Employee Recognition.....	7
IIF .....	8
Calendar .....	8

## Living Well

*How about them apples?*

Maybe you saw the booth during World Day on the Mall (or should I say World Day in the Hall?) If you were able to attend, the benefit of being at State Personnel's Wellness booth was to receive 1) a free apple, 2) free information, and 3) answers to your questions about Wellness from me, Meghan Hayes. The apples were donated by several local grocery stores and food vendors. State Personnel's Wellness Team extends our sincere gratitude for the fruit.



### What is Wellness?

Wellness is many things, primarily what you personally put into your daily life to "live well." Some examples of Wellness are: health screenings and assessments, smoking cessation, nutrition and weight management, personal safety, physical activity or exercise, stress management, and employee health services and benefits. How does a Wellness program help State of Nebraska employees? Wellness programs can improve employee attendance, productivity, and mental, physical, emotional, vocational, and social well-being for employees and their families.

### What is "Living Well"?

Living Well is the new link on the DAS—State Personnel web site under Benefits. The link is available for YOU (State of Nebraska employees and your families) to read carefully and find more about how to live a healthier lifestyle. What you will find on the web site are

- An Events Calendar, which includes information about health fairs, lunch'n'learns, and health observances,
- Links to other wellness and lifestyle sites,
- Announcements/Reminders (Flu Shots are here).

Our target audience is State of Nebraska employees and their families.

If you have any questions or ideas regarding the web site or the Wellness program, please contact:

Jana Nunemaker, (402) 471-4107, [jnunemak@notes.state.ne.us](mailto:jnunemak@notes.state.ne.us)  
Meghan Hayes, (402) 471-3247, [dtrainin@notes.state.ne.us](mailto:dtrainin@notes.state.ne.us)

So, why should you visit the Living Well site? To improve your quality of life! Here's to our health!

[www.das.state.ne.us/personnel/benefits](http://www.das.state.ne.us/personnel/benefits)



# Safe Driving is Everyone's Business.

## Do Your Part.

While driving for work do you struggle to navigate clogged highways, inch through jam-packed intersections, or do you cruise along scenic two-lane rural roads? Regardless of the roads you are traveling, you are undoubtedly encountering ever-increasing fender benders from hurried motorists and experiencing disabled vehicles blocking roadways causing unplanned waits and travel delays.

In a recent survey, 95 percent of Americans said that over the past three years, the traffic they encountered during their daily travels has gotten worse or they reported having seen no improvement to the already congested roadways.\* In 2001, commuters spent over 550 million hours per week in their cars and that number is on the rise. One out of three crashes and one out of five fatalities happen in congestion caused by a previous crash.

While it is obvious that traffic congestion costs us time, what is less obvious, but still very real, is the cost in traffic deaths and injuries. Bottlenecks aren't just a nuisance; the lack of adequate capacity on our roadways actually causes traffic crashes that injures or kill drivers and their passengers. As more vehicles travel on roadways, speeds and spacing between vehicles are reduced. The time needed for drivers to react is significantly shortened, increasing driver frustration. Dangerous driver actions become more common and the potential for crashes increases.

According to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), drivers must face the hard truth: at least half of the congestion we encounter is our own fault. We run out of gas. We butt into merge lines. We miss our exit ramp and slam into each other. When trouble strikes someone else, we slow down to gawk. Traffic engineers call the ensuing backups nonrecurring\* congestion. These are the delays that frustrate people the most, the kind that no amount of careful planning can contain. They strike anywhere, at any time, with the power to turn a barely tolerable—but at least predictable—drive into a full-blown muddle.

The good news is that we can all do our part, to make roadways less congested and more reliable. While motorists cannot control road or weather conditions or suspend work zones, drivers can control the sizable segment of congestion caused by crashes and breakdowns simply by driving more carefully, knowing their route, and taking better care of their vehicles.

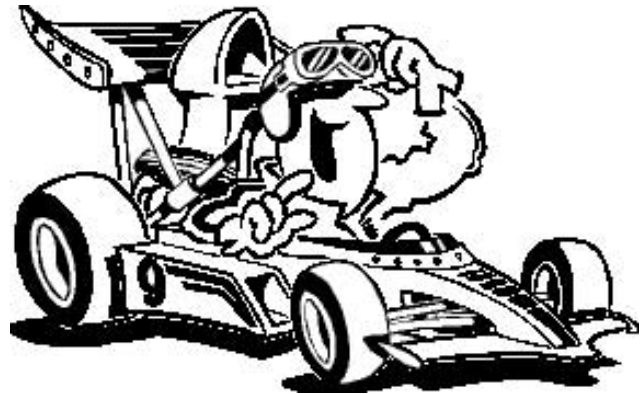
Driver experts know that human factors are responsible for causing more crashes than either roadway or vehicle factors. Getting people to improve their driving habits won't solve all traffic hardships but it will certainly improve the situation. If motorists will do their part by driving more

carefully they will cause fewer collisions and save not only lives, but time.

The goal of Drive Safely Work Week, a workplace traffic safety campaign, is to emphasize the importance of driving safely on and off the job to eliminate preventable crashes. The Network of Employers for Traffic Safety sponsors this national campaign annually to promote safe driving practices for all employees. This year's campaign focuses on the positive actions that each driver can take to ensure their safety and the safety of others sharing the road as they drive for work or commute to and from work. These days it's more important than ever to drive carefully, share the road, plan ahead, and take better care of your vehicle.

This week and every week, we encourage everyone to be fully prepared when they get behind the wheel. You will improve your odds of always arriving at your destination safely. That's why it's always essential to **Do Your Part. Safe Driving is Everyone's Business.**

*\*April 2003 survey, AAA and the American Public Transportation Association*



**Do you know that up to 60 percent of traffic delays stem not from too much volume on our nation's roadways but from nonrecurring congestion?**

- 25% from crashes and disabled vehicles
- 15% from bad weather
- 10% from work zones
- 5% from special events
- 5% from poor signal timing

*SOURCE: Federal Highway Administration*

### Cause of Crashes

- 93% human factors
- 33% roadway factors
- 13% vehicle factors

*SOURCE: Tre-Level Study*



## Can You Read the Road?

Test your road IQ and sharing-the-road skills. You may be surprised at what you learn!

1. True or False? Yellow lines on the road separate traffic traveling in the same direction.
2. Do you know what a yellow **EXIT ONLY** panel below a green freeway guide sign means?
3. What does a **FLASHING DON'T WALK** or a don't walk symbol tell you?
4. Are you ever permitted to cross a double solid yellow line?
5. What does a pentagon-shaped sign mean?
6. What do the familiar red, white, and blue shields tell drivers?
7. What is the purpose of the green and white "mile markers"?
8. What are the orange diamond signs used for?
9. In a "weaving section" where traffic is entering and exiting a freeway interchange, who is required to yield the right-of-way?
10. What direction are you traveling if you're on an Interstate highway numbered 1-494?

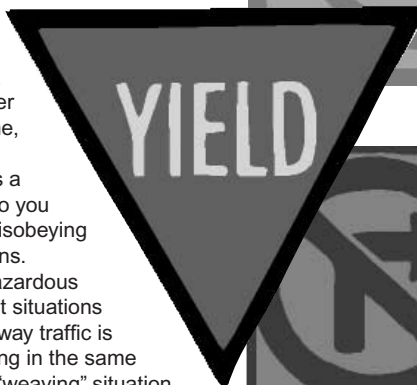


### What's Your Score?

- 10 correct A True Road Warrior
- 8-9 correct A Roadway Survivor
- 6-7 correct A Roadway Explorer
- 4-5 correct A Roadway Scout
- 1-3 correct Surrender Your Keys!



1. False. Yellow lines on the highway, whether solid or dashed, generally separate traffic going in opposite directions.
2. A yellow EXIT ONLY panel below a green freeway sign means that the lane under the panel becomes the exit ramp. If you remain in the lane, you must exit the freeway.
3. A FLASHING DON'T WALK or a don't walk symbol tells pedestrians already in the street that they should continue across; but tells pedestrians still on the curb not to start walking. Once the signal stops flashing and shows a STEADY DON'T WALK, pedestrians should not leave the curb.
4. The only time that you are permitted to cross a double solid yellow line is when you are making a left turn into a driveway or business entrance.
5. The pentagon shape with the point to the top warns us to watch for school children. The new optional color for these signs — fluorescent yellow-green — is much easier to see in low light and foggy/rainy weather.
6. The familiar red, white, and blue shield tells drivers they are traveling on an Interstate Highway. Even-numbered roads with 2 digits run east-west; north-south Interstates have odd numbers with 2 digits. Interstate routes with 3 digits are beltways, loops or spur routes.
7. The green and white "mile markers" help us gauge how far we've driven, or how far we need to drive, through a state.
8. CONSTRUCTION signs are orange diamonds specifically used only to WARN drivers about construction and work zone activity. Don't forget to slow down and give road crews a 'brake'! Remember that in a work zone, a flagger has the same authority as a regulatory sign, so you can be cited for disobeying his or her directions.
9. One of the most hazardous lane-management situations occurs when freeway traffic is exiting and entering in the same area. During this "weaving" situation, vehicles entering the freeway have to yield the right-of-way to through-traffic and exiting traffic.
10. If you're on an Interstate highway with the number 1-494, you may be traveling in a circle. Three-digit Interstates beginning with an even number are often loops or connect to other major highways. If the first of the three digits is an even number, the highway usually connects to another Interstate at both ends - in a loop. If the first of the three digits is an odd number, the highway usually connects with an Interstate at only one end.





# GIVE THE GREAT OUTDOORS!



**This holiday season  
give Nebraska  
outdoor permits.  
Year-round wonders  
await everyone on  
your list!**

*To Order...*

call toll-free

**1-800-742-0056**

Monday through Friday, 7:30 am to 5 pm CST

or order online at:

**<http://www.ngpc.state.ne.us/infoeduc/catalog/>**

*\*Hunting and fishing permits shown are representative only of permits purchased from vendors.*

## 2004 ANNUAL HUNT PERMIT\*

A hunting permit is the ideal gift for that hard-to-buy-for outdoor enthusiast on your list.

*Prices include agent issuing fee.*

**Resident Hunt Permit.....\$12**

**Nonresident Hunt Permit.....\$68**



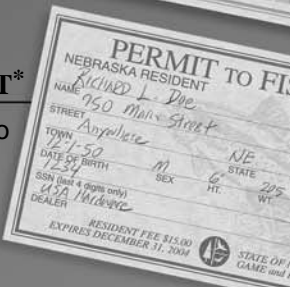
## 2004 ANNUAL FISH PERMIT\*

A fishing permit is your passport to outdoor fun year-round.

*Prices include agent issuing fee.*

**Resident Fish Permit.....\$16**

**Nonresident Fish Permit.....\$46**



## 2004 ANNUAL PARK PERMIT

Enjoy more than 80 Nebraska state parks and recreation areas.

*Prices include agent issuing fee.*

**Annual Park Entry Permit...\$17.35**

**Duplicate Permit.....\$8.85**



## Thoroughly Modern Thanksgiving

With the rapid pace of our lives today, we often find conflict with holidays and a feeling of wanting to maintain the warm traditions of the past while keeping up with a busy work schedule. Thanks to modern technology, it is possible to do both. And the Department of Agriculture's Poultry & Egg Division offers the following suggestions in selection of turkey, preparation, handling leftovers and food safety to continue the tradition, yet have modern Thanksgiving turkey dinner.

If your family is counting on an old-fashioned turkey dinner for Thanksgiving, don't disappoint them—roast a thoroughly modern turkey. An old-fashioned turkey dinner may mean stuffing the bird. But, realize that an unstuffed turkey saves time, both in preparation and cooking. It's also safer to cook the turkey unstuffed. The USDA recommends NOT stuffing your Thanksgiving turkey. With faster cooking birds, the turkey may be done before the stuffing. For the best, most uniform results for both the turkey and the stuffing, your favorite stuffing recipe or packaged stuffing mix can then be cooked separately in a covered casserole to compliment the roasted turkey.

But before you are ready to make the dressing, you need to decide how much turkey you should purchase. In choosing a turkey for the holiday meal, plan on about one pound of turkey for each person. This allows plenty for holiday appetites plus economical after-holiday meal planning. Next comes the turkey preparation.

Preparing turkey is easy, especially when you follow the guidelines offered by the Poultry & Egg Division of the Nebraska Department of Agriculture. We offer tips on thawing, cooking and turkey food safety by requesting Take the Guesswork Out of Roasting a Turkey, and for free recipes and ideas on how to utilize leftover turkey, contact Mary Torell, Public Information Officer, Nebraska Department of Agriculture, Poultry and Egg Division at [mtorell2@unl.edu](mailto:mtorell2@unl.edu) or call (402) 472-0752. Each contact will receive either a \$2 off coupon for a regular turkey, or a \$2 off coupon for a smoked turkey from NORBEST, a Nebraska grown product. For more turkey cooking methods log onto the Nebraska Department of Agriculture's web site at [www.agr.state.ne.us](http://www.agr.state.ne.us) and click on Poultry & Egg, then click turkey cooking tips. You can also check out the National Turkey Federation's web site at [www.eatturkey.com](http://www.eatturkey.com).

Each contact will receive either a \$2 off coupon for a regular turkey, or a \$2 off coupon for a smoked turkey from NORBEST, a Nebraska grown product. If you don't receive the recipe brochures and coupon in time for Thanksgiving, you can use them for the Christmas holidays.



Here's a delicious, yet different chili recipe utilizing leftover turkey.

### White Turkey Chili

(Makes 12 –1 Cup Servings)

- 1 Tablespoon olive oil
- 1 Cup chopped onion
- 1 Cup chopped celery
- 4 Cups chopped, cooked turkey
- 2 Cans (15.5 oz.) Great Northern Beans, drained
- 2 Cans (11 oz.) White Shoepeg Corn, undrained
- 1 Can (4 oz.) chopped green chilies
- 4 Cups turkey or chicken broth (low sodium)
- 1 Teaspoon ground cumin

Heat oil in a skillet over medium heat. Add onion and celery, cook and stir 2–3 minutes. Place the rest of the ingredients in a large saucepan (at least 4-qt.) Stir well. Cover and cook about 15 minutes over medium heat stirring occasionally until thoroughly heated. Sprinkle mozzarella cheese on top if desired.

**Alternate Cooking Method:** Place all ingredients in a slow cooker and cook on low for approximately 6–8 hours.

**Nutrient Content Per Serving:** 259 calories; 29 gm carbohydrates; 21 gm protein; 263 mg sodium; 6 gm fat; 2 gm saturated fat; 37 mg cholesterol.



## Suggestion System Awards

- #417— Bill O. Gartside, Kevin J. Brewer, Christine L. Moraczewski, Alison L. Witt, Carmella L. Strong, Nebraska State Patrol. Reduce DNA reference sample volume by 50%. Awarded \$140 and a Certificate of Appreciation to each suggester by Nebraska State Patrol. 7/22/02
- #426— John H. Little, Steve J. Shaw, Nebraska State Patrol. Communications Message Switcher replacement. Awarded \$1,352.25 and a Certificate of Appreciation to each suggester by Nebraska State Patrol. 7/22/02
- #436— Glenn L. Elwell, Nebraska State Patrol. Receive/obtain used/new SCBA(Self Contained Breathing Apparatus) from other State's that are transitioning to a new version of equipment, at no cost to the State of Nebraska. Awarded \$3,126.90 and a Certificate of Appreciation from Nebraska State Patrol. 7/22/02
- #439— Doug A. Young, Nebraska State Patrol. Negotiated with LES for repairs needed to replace a mechanical system in the State Patrol Traffic Office that eliminated state expenditures. Awarded \$2,027.10 and a Certificate of Appreciation by Nebraska State Patrol. 7/22/02
- #443— Cory S. Hinrichs, Health & Human Services System. Standardize mailing addresses in NFOCUS/Charts data. Not implemented but recommended awarding Certificate of Appreciation by Health & Human Services System. 1/27/03
- #451— Jon P. Frank and Susan M. Sitzmann, Department of Economic Development. Put Nebraska Development News newsletter on web site. Awarded \$1,200 and a Certificate of Appreciation to each suggester by the Department of Economic Development. 7/22/02
- #455— Ronald R. Dulas, Department of Administrative Services. Restore original Capitol leather chairs on site rather than send them out to private sector. Awarded \$774 and a Certificate of Appreciation by the Department of Administrative Services. 1/27/03
- #469— Kathryn Bean, Health and Human Services System. Monitor / save unborn Medicaid costs. Not implemented, but awarded and a Certificate of Appreciation by Health and Human Services System. 8/4/03
- #482— Mark J. Olson, Health and Human Services System. When food stamp applications are reviewed, application process should include property inquiry on County Assessor's web site where applicable. Awarded \$25 and a Certificate of Appreciation by Health and Human Services System. 10/20/03



- #484— Sonja L. Horst, Health and Human Services System. Reduce number of State phone directories distributed to agencies. Awarded \$25 and a Certificate of Appreciation by Health and Human Services. 10/20/03
- #486— John A. Dageforde, Department of Roads. Particular pieces of equipment that need to be heated/cooled to temperature, be set up on timers to come on or shut off at predetermined times. Awarded \$1,278.23 and Certificate of Appreciation by Department of Roads. 10/20/03
- #495— Karen J. Parde, Health and Human Services System. Develop a state car pool system for traveling to conferences. Not implemented, but awarded and a Certificate of Appreciation by Department of Administrative Services. 8/4/03
- #496— Stan Mitchell, Department of Labor. Change way agency print job listings. Suggestion was already part of management plan but was not being implemented in one area. Awarded \$25 and a Certificate of Appreciation by Department of Labor for bringing to their attention.. 8/4/03
- #505— Corey Cashmere, Crime Commission. One central location (online) where news organizations/anyone can register an e-mail address or fax number to receive press releases. Awarded \$25 and a Certificate of Appreciation by Department of Administrative Services. 10/20/03



## Employee Recognition

Ceremonies were held across the state during the month of October to recognize 2105 employee who had reached milestones in their careers. Special notice should be given to the following:

### 45 Years of Service

#### Health & Human Services

Gloria R. Ottersberg  
Janet M. Robinson  
Arlene Sophia Ropers

#### Roads

Dennis L. Custer  
Lyman D. Freemon  
Freddie D. Lentz  
Dalyce F. Ronnau  
Daniel J. Sharp  
Frank Veverka  
Robert L. Wright

#### Supreme Court

June A. Kucera

### 50 Years of Service

#### Roads

Osvalds O. Bumanis  
Louis P. Wenzl

### Employee of the Year

#### Administrative Services

Tammy H. Honnor  
Larry D. Shaw

#### Aeronautics

Dianne L. Nuttelmann

#### Agriculture

Elaine K. Robinson

#### Attorney General

Lianne Garza

#### Auditor

Justin Francis

#### Banking

Laura A. Larson

#### Blind & Visually Impaired

##### Commission

Connie K. Carlow

#### Corrections

Jeffrey C. Fisher  
Nikki K. Krause  
Douglas D. Reynolds  
James F. Sweredoski  
Emily E. Walter

#### Education

Theresa M. Sloup

#### Electrical Board

Randall J. Bruening

#### Environmental Quality

Todd H. Davis

#### Equal Opportunity Commission

Paula Reed Gardner

#### Fire Marshal

Deborah A. Hostettler

#### Game & Parks

Jeff Rawlinson

#### Health & Human Services

Jeffrey P. Casper  
Shirley D. Frazier  
Donna R. Hajek  
Marijo Herman  
Monica A. Hinrichs  
Dennis L. Hintz  
Cheryl A. Husak  
Corinne I. Jensen  
Alice A. Kuhn  
M. Anne Pamperl  
Gladys Valderrama  
Susan L. Zook

#### Labor

Kim Neesen

#### Library Commission

Julie M. Pinnell

#### Liquor Control

Mona Wanser

#### Military

Bradley R. Musick

#### Motor Vehicles

Robert S. Wissinger

#### Natural Resources

Jeff J. Hogan

#### Parole Board

Barbara A. Wilken

#### Property Assessment & Taxation

Glen H. Rosenthal

#### Public Service Commission

Kathleen J. Lahman

#### Retirement

Teresa J. Miller

#### Revenue

Franz Schwarz

#### Roads

Carlene D. Burrows  
Dale A. Dreeszen  
Clay E. Duncan  
Sylvia L. Hilderbrand  
Edward D. Rinehart

#### State Patrol

Alan Eberle  
Lisa Hernandez

### Supervisor / Manager of the Year

#### Administrative Services

David A. Hattan  
Craig R. VanSlyke

#### Agriculture

Robert Storant

#### Attorney General

Lynne Fritz

#### Auditor

Mary Jean Avery

#### Banking

Karen A. Reynolds

#### Blind & Visually Impaired Commission

Constance M. Daly

#### Corrections

Scott Busboom  
Keith A. Ernst  
James E. Francis  
Catherine L. Gibson-Beltz  
"Ona""Ruta"" Snipes"

#### Economic Development

Lara J. Huskey  
Darrell A. Ullman  
Patricia Wood

#### Environmental Quality

Robert S. Kemp

#### Equal Opportunity Commission

Kathleen A. Stephens

#### Fire Marshal

Joe D. Hanson

#### Game & Parks

Craig A. Stover

#### Health & Human Services

Kimberly Adams  
Deborah A. Buske  
Ronald A. Cox  
Charlotte. Dunn  
Paula Eurek  
Colleen R. Fiegenger  
Linda J. Gerner  
Velna L. Hasch  
Joseph R. Homan  
Sandra F. Kohtz  
Pamela J. Mann  
Jolene M. Pfeiffer  
Brenda Roetman  
Mary Sullivan

#### Labor

Ronald Myers

#### Liquor Control

"Gerald""Jerry"" Van Ackeren"

#### Military

Bruce T. Craig

#### Motor Vehicles

Susan M. Holbert

#### Natural Resources

Allan E. Ruhge

#### Property Assessment & Taxation

Richard Erickson

#### Retirement

Patrick M. Kuhry

#### Revenue

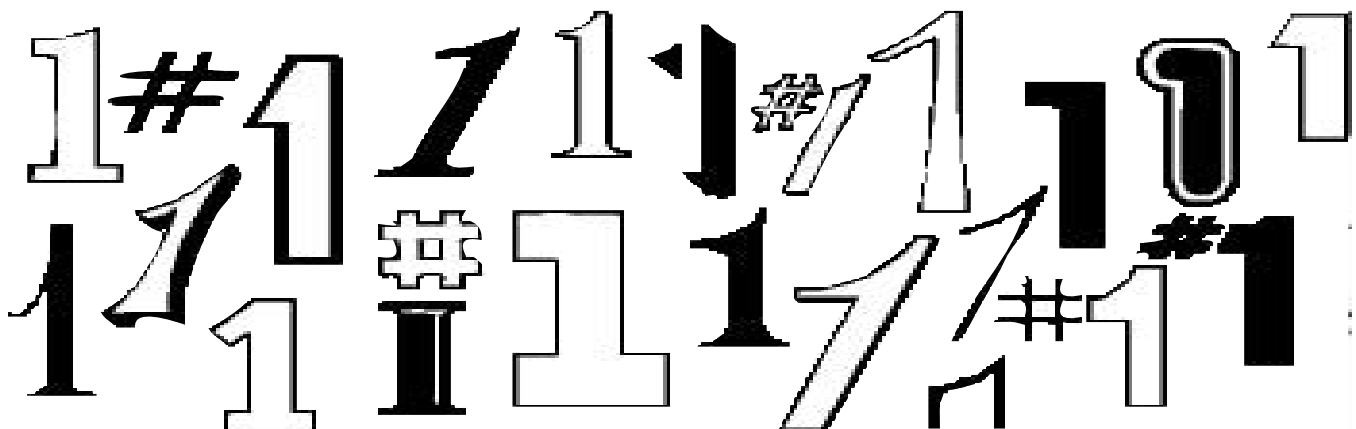
Nicholas J. Kucirek

#### Roads

Jay H. Gustafson  
Bruce H. Hunzeker  
Steven C. McBeth  
Robert L. Schmit  
Kerry W. Scott

#### State Patrol

Ronald F. Balthazor  
Norbert Francis Liebig



## IIF

The next Interactive Informational Forum for State of Nebraska Human Resource Professionals will be held Tuesday, December 9 at the Lancaster County Extension Building, 444 Cherrycreek Road.

Tentatively, the agenda will contain information on competency based interviewing techniques from Mike Carrol at HHS, the latest and greatest NIS info, and a presentation on Affirmative Action...how it relates to agencies, and what services the DAS Affirmative Action Specialist can provide.

Also included will be a presentation on a new State program and information on how Employee Wellness benefits employers.

## Mark Your Calendar!

### November

- 11 Veterans Day  
State Holiday
- 27 Thanksgiving  
State Holiday
- 28 Day after Thanksgiving  
State Holiday

### December

- 25 Christmas  
State Holiday

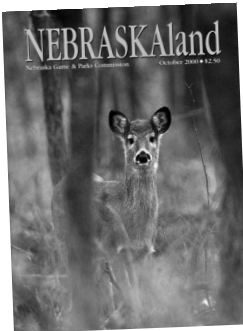
### January

- 1 New Years Day  
State Holiday
- 19 Martin Luther King Jr.'s Birthday  
State Holiday

*Note: Christmas Day was incorrectly printed as December 13 in an earlier issue.*

# Holiday Gift Ideas

from NEBRASKAland Magazine



## NEBRASKAland Magazine

Send award-winning *NEBRASKAland* to all those special people on your gift list. Every issue is filled with breathtaking photographs and informative, entertaining articles on Nebraska's outdoors, history, parks and places. New subscribers get *Birding Nebraska* FREE with a one-year (10 issues) subscription!

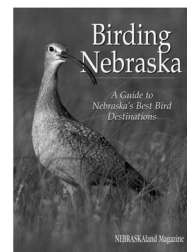
**\$14** (plus tax) — **State Employee Special, Save \$2**

Shop online at  
[outdoornebraska.org](http://outdoornebraska.org)

Call  
**1-800-742-0056**  
to subscribe or  
request a free  
*NEBRASKAland*  
Gift Catalog.

## NEBRASKAland Magazine Gift Catalog

Check out the 2004 *NEBRASKAland* Gift Catalog. It's full of great gift ideas for the outdoor enthusiasts on your holiday gift list. From bird houses to boonie hats and prints to permits, you are sure to find a unique gift for anyone. **Call 800-742-0056 today and request a free copy!**



Available Feb. 2004

**Each new  
subscription  
includes the new  
Birding Nebraska  
FREE**

